RESEARCH MISCONDUCT COMPLAINANT FACT SHEET

UC San Diego observes the highest standards of integrity in its scientific and research activities. All UC San Diego employees, students and scholars are expected to aspire to the highest standards of integrity in their research and to be aware of and comply with applicable policies and procedures of the University and the external entities funding their research. The University takes all allegation(s) of Research Misconduct seriously and reviews these allegations in accordance with the [UC San Diego Integrity of Research Policy](https://blink.ucsd.edu/sponsor/rci/index.html).

What is Research Misconduct

Research Misconduct is defined by federal law and University policy as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.

- **Fabrication** is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.
- **Falsification** is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research records.
- **Plagiarism** is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.

If you suspect that Research Misconduct has occurred, contact Sandra Brown, Vice Chancellor for Research at sandrabrown@ucsd.edu, (858) 534-3526, or Angela McMahill, Executive Director, Research Compliance and Integrity at amcmahill@ucsd.edu, (858) 534-7321.

Research Misconduct Review Process

The Research Integrity Officer (RIO) or their designee is the individual responsible for oversight of Research Misconduct at UC San Diego. The first stage in reviewing a complaint of Research Misconduct is a preliminary assessment to determine whether the complaint falls within the definition of Research Misconduct and if so, whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant an inquiry. The allegation must be credible and specific so that evidence of the Research Misconduct can be identified.

If the RIO determines that an inquiry is warranted, a panel of faculty members (the Standing Inquiry Committee) will review the evidence and interview key witnesses. If the Standing Inquiry Committee concludes that there is probable cause that Research Misconduct may have occurred, an investigation will be initiated.

During an investigation, a separate panel of faculty members with appropriate scientific expertise will review the evidence in depth and interview relevant witnesses. At the conclusion of the investigation, the panel will make a recommendation regarding whether, by a preponderance of the evidence, the respondent engaged in Research Misconduct and, if so, whether the respondent acted intentionally, knowingly or recklessly.

In order for there to be a finding of Research Misconduct, there must be:

- A significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community, and
- The misconduct be committed intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly, and
- The allegation be proven by a preponderance of the evidence.

For additional information, please see the [Research Misconduct Review Process](https://blink.ucsd.edu/sponsor/rci/index.html).
Rights and Responsibilities of Complainant
A Complainant is a person who makes a good faith allegation of Research Misconduct. The Complaint is expected to maintain confidentiality regarding the matter and cooperate in the review of the Research Misconduct allegation. After making an allegation, the Complainant’s role is to serve as a witness in any subsequent inquiry or investigation. If the allegation moves forward to an inquiry and/or an investigation, the Complainant will be notified. The Complainant however is not entitled to receive information about the status or outcome of the proceedings.

If the Complainant wishes to keep his, her or their identity confidential, efforts will be made to protect the identity of the Complainant, but confidentiality cannot be assured. The identity of the parties involved are limited to those who need to know in order to carry out a thorough, competent, objective, and fair Research Misconduct proceeding.

Protection of Complainant
The Complainant has the right to be protected from any retaliation for making an allegation or serving as a witness in an inquiry or investigation. University of California employees may not retaliate in any way against Complainants, Witnesses, or Committee members. Any alleged or apparent retaliation should be reported immediately to the RIO. UC San Diego PPM (PPM 200-14) provides information on the protection of whistleblowers from retaliation.

Resources
The Research Misconduct Resources Factsheet contains information regarding support and assistance for members of the UC San Diego research community involved in a Research Misconduct action.

For additional information or assistance, please visit the Research Compliance and Integrity (RCI) Office page on Research Integrity or contact RCI at rci@ucsd.edu or (858) 822-4939.